



MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



CURRENT

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

FEBRUARY 2021

NEWS



PHOTO COURTESY MEDORA ELLINGSON

Meet a “Go-Getter” who is excelling thanks to family and 4-H roots

*At ease showing one of her family’s Angus heifers during a former Morton County Fair, **Medora Ellingson** knows the judge is looking for a balance of muscle, capacity and structure. In this month’s local pages, learn how hands-on lessons in ranching and 4-H judging workouts have given her confidence and life skills that will help her excel in any career path.*

Also in this issue:

- Consider serving as a board director for Mor-Gran-Sou
- Save the date:
Annual Meeting, July 16
- Deadlines approaching for scholarships and coloring contest
- Meeting minutes and more



Livestock judging workouts help students develop life skills

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



Medora Ellingson has an edge over some of her peers when it comes to judging livestock. A sophomore at Mandan High School, she grew up on the Ellingson Angus Ranch near St. Anthony, where parents Chad and Julie Ellingson produce bulls for commercial bull customers.

Helping the family run a registered Angus operation in the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative service area, Medora learned to feed, clean and prepare beef cattle and bulls for sale at an early age.

As a member of the Morton County Go-Getters 4-H Club, Medora knows just what she is looking for during a livestock-judging workout: traits including muscle, capacity and structure.

On Dec. 30, Morton County 4-H organized a Livestock Judging Workout for 4-H members. Eighteen youth from Morton and Oliver Counties attended the workout at Ellingson Angus Ranch, where they evaluated and ranked a “class” of four bulls.

Renae Gress, agriculture and natural resources Extension agent for Morton County, says all the Angus bulls were very good quality; it was up to the students to determine which ones were best and why. In a good-quality bull, a producer wants to see a combination of traits.

The students ranked them from one to four, with one being in the position to outperform the others. Then they wrote a set of reasons based on what they saw, and will present their observations to their coaches at the next meeting. The final part of the workout was the judge

*The livestock-judging workouts help the 4-H members prepare for local, state and national competitions. In going through the process, the kids also develop skills in reasoning, critical thinking, public speaking and time management. Here, sisters **Medora** and **Sheridan Ellingson** prepare for a class at the Morton County Fair. All the older Ellingson kids competed in livestock judging in 4-H and FFA, and the older ones made it to national competitions in high school.*



PHOTO BY RENAE GRESS

In December, Morton County Extension hosted a livestock-judging workout for 4-H members at Ellingson Angus Ranch near St. Anthony. Students evaluated four bulls and ranked them from one to four based on traits including muscle, volume, capacity and structure. Then they presented their findings to a judge, who asked them to defend their choices with reasons.

asking the students questions about their choices, and they had to give reasons to defend their decisions.

Chad Ellingson breaks down the desired traits and how they help the animal function more productively.

“The [kids] were looking at the muscularity and volume of the bulls. Volume is how deep and capacious they are; a direct correlation to ‘do-ability’ in cattle. If they have more gut capacity, they are better converters of grass on pasture. If they have structural correctness in their feet and legs, they have soundness to get out and graze,” he says.

During the workout, the students also evaluated the bulls for breed character, and have to know a variety of breeds if they want to compete at state and national levels.

Chad says Angus cattle should show very little white. The bulls should look masculine, and females should have a feminine angularity to their heads, which holds a direct correlation to productivity. Females are also evaluated for udder quality and teat placement.

Renae says in addition to learning more about livestock, the judging process helps kids develop communication and public speaking skills that will aid them in any career.

This particular workout is the first one hosted by Morton County 4-H after the holiday break. Chad says his family has hosted it for more than 10 years, and that they are glad to share their heated indoor facility and give the students a warm place to get a hands-on education.

Renae says 4-H members are active throughout the cold-weather months.

The kids in this livestock judging group practice on the weekends in January and February, and are working toward competing in the state contest in March. There, they can earn ribbons and awards based on their performance that day.

Medora’s education in agriculture started at an early age, thanks to her parents and siblings Stetson, Jameson, Sierra and Sheridan. Her knowledge continued to grow through the 4-H program, which she started in kindergarten, thanks to club leaders and peers who serve as mentors. Now she can use her knowledge and experience to help mentor others who are just coming to their first judging workout.

Medora says it’s “pretty cool” that her family hosts this livestock workout every year, and she is proud of the high-quality bulls her family is raising.

“We are helping everyone. We want to help our competitors, too,” she says. “In a few weeks, they [other clubs in other counties] will host a sheep workout for us. We help each other out, and bounce ideas off one another.”

On behalf of Mor-Gran-Sou, we thank Morton County Extension for educating and mentoring these youth in livestock judging and life skills. We also thank the Ellingson family for hosting these youth and being an example of the seventh cooperative principle: concern for community. ■

PRODUCTION SALE @ ELLINGSON ANGUS RANCH

Saturday, Feb. 6, 1 p.m. CT, at the ranch, St. Anthony

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members Chad and Julie Ellingson market about 350 Angus bulls each year. They hold annual production sales the first Saturday in February. This year they plan to sell 310 bulls, in addition to 1,000 commercial females that are customer-owned heifers.

For more information: <https://ellingsonangus.com> or ellingsonangus@westriv.com.

For additional production sales visit:

1) ndstockmen.org 2) www.agupdate.com/cattleseller/ 3) www.cattlerange.com



Mor-Gran-Sou's annual meeting scheduled for July 16, 2021

Are you looking for a way to serve the people of central southwestern North Dakota? Look no further, as Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative can help you fulfill that desire. Why not serve as a board director for the cooperative? The initial commitment is a three-year term, with provisions in the bylaws limiting a director to serving six consecutive three-year terms, after which time the director is not eligible for another six consecutive three-year terms until one year has elapsed.

At the annual meeting, the following three board positions will be elected:

- The At-Large position presently held by Mark Doll;
- The Morton County position presently held by Kathy Tokach; and
- The Sioux County position presently held by Chad Harrison.

Under the bylaws and due to the use of a mail-in ballot, no nominations are accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. Instead, the bylaws require the board of directors to appoint a Nominating Committee of five to nine members who geographically represent the cooperative. These members will provide a list of qualified and willing candidates to the board for approval and inclusion on the ballot at the board of directors' meeting scheduled for March 24, 2021. This date has been set so there is adequate time for each candidate's biographical information to be included with the notice of meeting sent to the members in June, along with the mail-in ballot for those who are unable to attend the annual meeting in person.

The Nominating Committee has been appointed by the board and met for the first time on Jan. 14. The members of the Nominating Committee include Bryce Allen, New

Salem; Jennifer Bonogofsky, St. Anthony; Jackie Buckley, Mandan; Curtis Feland, Almont; Glenda Gross, Selfridge; Garek Murphy, Fort Yates; Jim Neubauer, Mandan; Donald D. Roth, New Leipzig; and Shari Striegel, Carson.

For a person to be nominated, the member vying for a board seat must submit the completed declaration of candidacy form to Mor-Gran-Sou by 4 p.m. CT (3 p.m. MT) on Thursday, March 11, 2021. The completed form must be mailed to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Attn: Jackie Miller, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297. If you or someone you know is interested in being nominated, please contact one of the Nominating Committee members or Jackie at Mor-Gran-Sou by calling 800-750-8212, 701-663-0297 or 701-597-3301. You can also email Jackie at jlmler@morgransou.com.

The Nominating Committee members or Jackie can provide you or the potential candidate with the declaration of candidacy form. It is also located on Mor-Gran-Sou's website; to download the form electronically, visit our website at www.morgransou.com and click Home/Your Power in Membership/Forms and Applications/Declaration of Candidacy Form. Candidate qualifications can be found at www.morgransou.com and click Your Cooperative/Articles and Bylaws/Board of Directors/402 Director Qualification or on the declaration of candidacy form.

If you have questions about the process, give Jackie a call. All qualified and willing candidates who have completed and forwarded the written declaration of candidacy form to the Mor-Gran-Sou office by the March 11 deadline will be included in the list the Nominating Committee will provide to the board. ■

Bylaws and resolutions for the annual meeting

Under the bylaws, any bylaw amendments or resolutions must be presented to the members in writing in advance of the annual meeting scheduled for July 16, 2021. The board of directors has charged the Nominating Committee with reviewing and advising the board of any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions. Therefore, any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions should be submitted in writing no later than March 18, and/or they can be presented in-person at the following meeting of the

Nominating Committee:

- March 18, 2021, in the Mor-Gran-Sou office board room in Flasher at 7 p.m. CT or by conference call.

If you do wish to submit a bylaw amendment or resolution in writing, please forward it to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attn: Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297, before March 18. Thank you. ■



Cooperative offers student scholarships



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative takes pride in assisting with the development of rural leadership through our scholarship program. We feel it's important to help finance our local students' educational journeys by offering scholarships to qualifying seniors. With this in mind, we are happy to continue offering our program and supporting graduating seniors in our service area. The applicants must be U.S. citizens and dependents of Mor-Gran-Sou members. All scholarships will be awarded during the 2020-2021 school year.

The co-op will award nine, \$500 scholarships to qualified applicants whose parent(s) or guardian(s) are members of the co-op. School representatives from Elgin-New Leipzig Public School, Flasher Public School, Glen Ullin Public School, Hebron Public School, Mandan Public School, New Salem-Almont Public School, Selfridge Public School, Standing Rock Community School, and Solen Public School will select one graduating senior to receive the funds. Interested in applying? Students should contact their school counselor for deadline information. The schools will then forward each recipient's name to Mor-Gran-Sou.

The co-op will also award one \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior from a school outside of our service area. Please contact our office if interested.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric continues to award a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

We award this scholarship to a student already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Recipients will be chosen on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade point average; activities, achievements and honors; work experience; a personal statement of career goals; an essay question centered on local cooperatives and how they serve the area; and an appraisal from a high school or college counselor or adviser, instructor or a work supervisor who knows the student well. All post-secondary students who have parents that are members of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric are eligible to apply. Applications are available at area schools, co-op headquarters in Flasher, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is awarding one \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a lineworker. The scholarship will be awarded during the 2020-2021 school year. Applications are available at area schools, co-op headquarters in Flasher, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Mor-Gran-Sou is also awarding one \$500 scholarship sponsored by West Dakota Utility Services.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a mechanic. Applications are available at area schools, co-op headquarters in Flasher, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Luck of the Draw scholarships

Mor-Gran-Sou will award two \$500 Luck of the Draw scholarships to be drawn at our annual meeting on July 16. All high school seniors who are dependents of Mor-Gran-Sou members and have not previously been chosen for a Mor-Gran-Sou scholarship are eligible for this scholarship. Students must attend our annual meeting and be accompanied with at least one parent or guardian, and will be required to RSVP before the meeting. ■

Applications are due no later than 4:30 p.m. CT (3:30 p.m., MT) on Friday, Feb. 12, 2021.

Please deliver or mail all necessary information to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative at P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND 58535-0297.

If you have questions or would like further information, please call Julie or Beth at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212.



PHOTO COURTESY GLEN ULLIN TIMES

Members of GUPPIE, Glen Ullin People Promoting Interests and Events, accepted a donation including **Rita Wallin, Marie Bittner, Karen Emter, Mary Morman and Mary Sibla**. The money was used to replace an old sign, located east of the city auditorium, that was faded and no longer lit. A digital sign will take its place; the message board will share upcoming events and activities with the community. Mor-Gran-Sou also gave a donation.

‘To move forward, you have to give back’

This quote from Oprah Winfrey reflects the special bond that ties Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative to our members and to the communities we serve. With Giving Hearts Day approaching, we want to share some of our charitable efforts over the past year thanks to support from you, our members. We appreciate the opportunity to give back while providing an essential service, and being a part of area progress.

When we helped bring electric service to rural North Dakota more than 73 years ago, the quality of

life improved. In some parts of our service area, the landscape is still quite rural. From our farming and ranching members to more urban residents and business owners, Mor-Gran-Sou’s membership is quite diverse. That diversity, coupled with changes in technology, energy and government regulations, can result in challenges.

While our short- and long-term needs may differ, we share the same desire to see our area communities thrive – because like you, we live here, too.

While our top priority is to provide

safe, reliable and affordable electric service to you, equally important is our mission to enrich your quality of life. Concern for community is the seventh electric cooperative principle, and central to the way in which we operate.

As your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, we know that electricity plays a critical role in modern-day life. We also know it takes more than poles and power lines to energize our local communities.

Reflecting on 2020, we hope we made a difference through charitable gifts and acts of service.



We conferred several Operation Round Up grants including one to the Carson Food Pantry. The majority of food and supplies distributed went directly to Mor-Gran-Sou members. We also gave a donation to the New Leipzig Rural Fire District.

Mor-Gran-Sou, as a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation, played a role in awarding another area grant. It went to the town of Glen Ullin to help purchase a digital street sign that conveys information.

When the 2020 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour was cancelled due to the pandemic, your board of directors awarded essay contest winner Brynn Gaebe with a scholarship in place of the trip to Washington, D.C. She will receive the scholarship when she graduates.

Your board feels strongly about supporting the educational journeys of area students. In 2020, Mor-Gran-Sou awarded \$5,000 in student scholarships to help finance the career path of students we hope will one day return to this area and add value.

In November, members read about Sioux County resident Chantelle Charging, who nominated Michelle Erickson and staff at the Abused Adult Resource Center (AARC) in Bismarck for the final

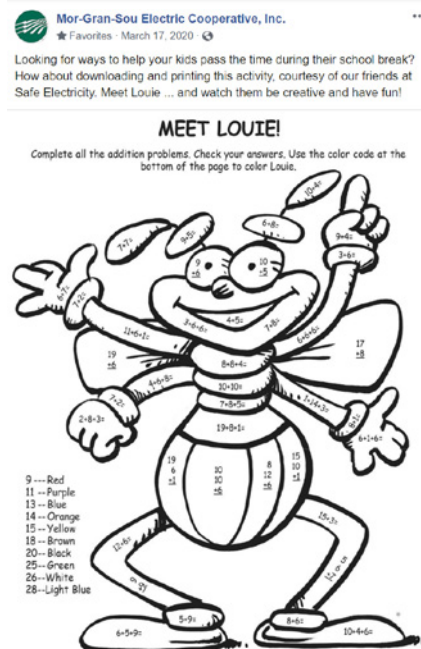
#WhoPowersYou award. Inspired by Chantelle's life experiences and assistance from AARC, some Mor-Gran-Sou employees participated in a fitness challenge that generated a \$300 donation to AARC on her behalf.

With safety in mind, we frequently addressed a variety of electrical dangers and safety precautions on social media. We posted easy word searches and crossword puzzles to keep kids busy during the pandemic. Members, if you haven't already, please like and follow us on Facebook to learn timely cooperative and community news!

Many of our employees are also active behind the scenes, volunteering to power our local communities. Over the years, we've had many employees and directors serve on ambulance and fire districts and school boards, help at county fairs and coach youth sports. The list goes on and on, and our small towns keep going because people always step up and say, "Yes. I'm busy, but I can help."

Over the last seven decades, our community-focused people and programs have lifted community spirits — and of course — kept the lights on to power your lives and empower all of our actions. We couldn't do any of this without you, our members.

In partnership with you, we will continue moving forward by giving back. We all benefit by working together to improve the quality of life in our local communities. ■



Committed to community and your safety, Mor-Gran-Sou publishes regularly safety information on its Facebook page. Some information is geared toward kids, included crossword puzzles, word scrambles and coloring pages. This graphic was launched when the pandemic first hit and schools closed.

Giving Hearts Day: Feb. 11



Giving Hearts Day is a 24-hour fundraising event for charities in North Dakota and Minnesota. Since the first event in 2008, generous donors have given more than \$90 million. One-hundred percent of which goes directly to participating charities.

This year Giving Hearts Day will be held Thursday, Feb. 11.

Consider volunteering for your

favorite organization! Your time, skills and labor make a difference!

If you prefer to give a financial gift, visit www.givingheartsday.org and click "ways to give" to find some of your favorite organizations. Or, contact your favorite local organization and inquire on ways to give.

Your generosity helps power our local communities! ■

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: Dec. 16, 2020

- Approved the Nov. 18, 2020, Board meeting minutes
- Approved a special equipment and a work order inventory
- Reviewed the monthly director's financial report
- Confirmed Board review of the financial report for November
- Reviewed senior staff department reports
- Heard legal counsel report
- Reviewed minutes from WDUS Holdings, LLC Board meetings for all subsidiaries
- Heard Co-General Managers/CEOs update and reports on meetings attended
- Heard Policy Committee report
- Approved Fiscal Policy revision
- Approved Resolution for Amended Cafeteria Plan and appointment of Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative as administrator
- Approved several Western Area Power Cooperative contracts
- Heard report from Odney on results of the 2020 Mor-Gran-Sou Member Satisfaction Survey
- Approved registration for upcoming virtual director training
- Approved various voting delegates and alternates for upcoming virtual meetings
- Approved support for a Mandan street improvement near Mor-Gran-Sou facilities
- Reviewed upcoming virtual meetings
- Reviewed safety tips from Safety Coordinator
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting date:

Feb. 17, 2021;
time and location to be determined

Members are welcome to attend the board meetings at any time. Please contact Mor-Gran-Sou at cternes@morgransou.com, or call 1-800-750-8212 or 597-3301 to confirm the meeting date and location if you wish to attend.

To place an item on the agenda, please contact Board Chair Casey Wells or Co-General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Donald Franklund at 701-597-3301 at least one week in advance.

Members may obtain a copy of approved board minutes by completing and returning the "Request for Information or Data" form. You can find this form at www.morgransou.com, or contact the Flasher office to request a copy.

2-1-1 HELPLINE

FirstLink's **2-1-1 helpline** is a free phone service available 24/7 to the public. Call specialists offer supportive, non-judgmental listening ears and information about community programs statewide.

Text your zipcode to 898-211
or **Dial 2-1-1 or 701-235-7335**
to get connected to help & hope.

MYFIRSTLINK.ORG

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Holiday closing for Presidents Day: Monday, Feb. 15

In observance of Presidents Day, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, Feb. 15. Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.

HAPPY
VALENTINE'S DAY
SUNDAY, FEB. 14

PREPARE FOR TAX SEASON WITH



Print copies of your monthly utility bills for your tax records by logging into SmartHub! Visit www.morgransou.com and click SmartHub, and proceed to your billing history. If you have not signed up for SmartHub, you can set up a new, secure account. Please call 701-663-0297, 701-597-3301 or 1-800-750-8212 with questions!



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UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES
800-795-0555 OR 811

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair.....Casey Wells
Vice Chair.....Chad Harrison
Secretary-Treasurer..... Pam Geiger
DirectorsMark Doll, Vernard Frederick,
Rodney Froelich, Jay Larson,
Bob J. Leingang, Kathy Tokach

MANAGEMENT

Co-GM/CEO.Donald A. Franklund
Co-GM/CEO. Travis Kupper

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